

Attachment-2 Urban Design Review

INTERNAL MEMO



DATE August 17, 2022

TO **David DeGroot**, Senior Urban Designer
Katie Nasswetter, Senior Development Planner

FROM **Erica Beasley**, Senior Planner
Ute Maya-Giambattista, Principal, Urban Design
Matt Reid, Principal, Planning and Policy

DIVISION Fotenn Planning + Design

SUBJECT 785 Gordon Street: Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications, Urban Design Comments

This Urban Design Review has been prepared by Fotenn Planning + Design for the City of Guelph, Planning and Building Services department. The subject property is located at 785 Gordon Street, legally described as Northeast Half of Lot 1 Concession 7, Pulsnich in the City of Guelph. The owner/applicant has requested an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) to allow for a 10 storey, 389 unit/520 bedroom student residence development. Comments are based on a review of the following submissions from consultants prepared on behalf of the property owner/applicant (2371633 Ontario Inc.):

- / Planning Justification Report, prepared by GSP Group
- / Urban Design Brief, prepared by GSP Group
- / Site Plan, prepared by SRM Architects
- / Angular Planes, prepared by SRM Architects
- / Elevations 1 and 2, prepared by SRM Architects
- / Floor 1 Plan, prepared by SRM Architects
- / Preliminary Landscape Concept Plan, prepared by GSP Group
- / Waste Management Plan, prepared by SRM Architects
- / Shadow Study, prepared by SRM Architects
- / Pedestrian Level Wind Study, prepared by The Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel Laboratory

Submissions have been evaluated against urban design best practices and the City of Guelph's:

- / 1994 Official Plan¹ (2022 consolidation) Section 8.9: Built Form High-Rise Buildings
- / 1997 City of Guelph Zoning By-law²
- / 2018 Urban Design Manual: Gordon Street Intensification Corridor Concept Plan³
- / 2019 Sun and Shadow Study Terms of Reference⁴
- / Pedestrian Level Wind Studies Terms of Reference⁵

A site visit by Fotenn Senior Planner, Erica Beasley, occurred at 10 am on Sunday, June 12, 2022.

¹ <https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Official-Plan-February-2022-Consolidation.pdf>

² <https://guelph.ca/city-hall/by-laws-and-policies-2/zoning-by-law/>

³ <https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/UDConceptPlansfortheGordonStreetIntensificationCorridor.pdf>

⁴ <https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Guelph-Sun-Shadow-Study-Terms-of-Reference-19-05-27.pdf>

⁵ <https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Terms-of-Reference-for-Wind-for-the-City-of-Guelph-Guidelines-19-05-27.pdf>

The sections of this review are as follows:

1. Property Context
2. OPA and ZBA Requests
3. Official Plan Policies for High-Rise and Multi-unit Residential Buildings
4. Urban Design Manual: Gordon Street Intensification Corridor
5. Recent Developments and Proposals
6. Development Massing
7. Front Façades and Angular Planes
8. Common Amenity Spaces
9. Shadow Impacts External to the Property
10. Pedestrian Level Wind Impacts
11. Pedestrian Access and Circulation
12. Vehicle Circulation and Parking
13. Bicycle Parking
14. Loading and Refuse Pick-up
15. Summary and Next Steps

1. Property Context

The subject property is located at the southeast corner of Gordon Street and Harvard Road. The property measures ~8,462 m² (2.09 acres/0.8 hectares) and has frontages of 61.77 m on Gordon Street and 118.12 m on Harvard Road⁶. The property's front yard is along Gordon Street. The exterior side yard is along Harvard Road. The rear yard is at the west end of the property. The interior side yard is along the south side of the property between the required front and rear yards.

Existing development on the property consists of a 2-storey Days Inn hotel with a peaked roofline that has an equivalent height of an additional storey. The hotel is intended to be demolished as part of the proposed redevelopment project⁷. Vehicle access is currently provided from both Gordon Street and Harvard Road.

The subject property is located in the City's Official Plan Neighbourhood Commercial Centre designation and is within the Gordon Street Intensification Corridor identified in the City's Urban Design Manual. Intensification Corridors are located along major roads, arterials, and higher order transit corridors that are considered suitable for supporting higher density mixed-use development serviced by public transit. High density residential development is to be directed to Intensification Corridors.

Gordon Street is an arterial road and Harvard Road is a collector road. The property is located on Public Transit Routes 5, 6, 7, and 99, and is within walking distance from the GO transit line. Sidewalks are in place on both sides of Gordon Street and Harvard Road. Bike lanes are in place on both sides of Gordon Street.

⁶ Measurements taken from the Site Plan.

⁷ Mentioned in the June 13, 2022 Staff Report to City Council, accessed at: <https://pub-queph.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=26608>

The City's Zoning By-law identifies the subject property as being zoned SC.1-11 (Service Commercial). Adjacent properties are zoned R.1B-Single Detached, R.3A-52-Townhouse, and OR-34-Office Residential. A similar mix of zones is located across Gordon Street to the northeast. Low-rise commercial uses face the property across Harvard Road at the Campus Estates Plaza on a property zoned CC-Community Shopping Centre.

2. OPA and ZBA Requests

The applicant has requested an OPA to:

- / Redesignate the subject property from "Neighbourhood Commercial" to "High Density Residential"
- / Apply site specific policies to permit a maximum density of 615 bedrooms per hectare (resulting in 389 units/520 bedrooms)
- / Allow "convenience commercial uses" to have a maximum gross floor area of 600 m²

The Official Plan's standard High Density Residential designation would allow for a maximum of 10 storeys in height to be constructed, at a maximum net density of 150 units per hectare, and with a maximum of 400 m² of convenience commercial use.

The applicant has requested a ZBA for an extensive list of changes to the zoning. The requests most relevant to this urban design review are the following:

- / Change the zoning of the property from "Specialized Service Commercial (SC.1-11)" to "Specialized Residential Apartment (R.4B-XX)"
- / Increase the floor space index from a maximum of 1.5 to 2.55
- / Increase in the maximum angular plane from 45 to 52 degrees measured from the centreline of Harvard Road, and to 46 degrees measured from the centreline of Gordon Street
- / Reduce the minimum common amenity area from 7,980 m² (30 m² per dwelling unit for each unit up to 20 and for each additional dwelling unit 20 m² per dwelling unit) to 14 m² of common amenity areas (including private balconies and terraces) per dwelling unit but not less than 50 m² collectively shall be provided⁸
- / To allow common amenity areas within the front and exterior side yard and a length that is 4 times the width or greater
- / To reduce the landscaped open space from a minimum of 40% to a minimum of 33%
- / Reduce the required 3 m setback for parking spaces from lot lines to 1.4 m

The following sections provide comments on urban design elements of the proposed development.

3. Official Plan Polices for High-Rise and Multi-unit Residential Buildings

The City has yet to develop comprehensive standards for high-rise developments, which are categorized as buildings above 6 storeys, though several policies are included in the Official Plan’s Section 8.9 to guide this type of development. Applicable policies are indicated in the table below along with Fotenn’s urban design opinion on compliance/non-compliance. A more detailed review for compliance will be required at the Site Plan phase of the development application.

Table 1: Official Plan Built Form Policies for High-rise Buildings (Section 8.9)

Official Plan Policy:		Proposal Compliance/Non-compliance:
i)	To ensure tall buildings act as landmarks, they shall incorporate a distinctive bottom (e.g. podium), middle and top.	Partially compliant. The development has a distinctive podium achieved through colour contrast but would benefit from physical articulation above the 5 th storey to enhance the podium effect.
ii)	Parking should be provided primarily below grade with limited visitor surface parking...	Compliant. 79.5 % of the parking is proposed to be below grade; 175/220 parking spaces. The request is for 20% to be located at grade or below. The applicant should confirm the location of visitor parking.
iii)	Built-form studies addressing building massing, shadows, views, and microclimatic studies (e.g., wind) may be required to determine the potential impacts to the surrounding neighbourhood arising from tall buildings;	Partially compliant. Sufficient studies are provided, though two studies require adjustments. Wind study numerical values should reflect comfort ranges as set out by the City. The sun and shadow study needs adjustment for proper representation of incremental shadow.
iv)	Floor plate sizes of the tower portion (e.g. storeys five (5) and above) of the building may be limited to encourage slender and elegant tall buildings designs;	Non-compliant. The proposed building would consist of a bulky, long, rectangular tower above the podium.
v)	The tower portion (e.g. storeys five (5) and above) of the building shall be carefully placed to ensure adequate spacing between towers to allow for solar access and privacy.	Non-compliant. The monolithic slab form of the building’s tower portion creates a solid block of development without spacing that would allow for solar access.

The Official Plan additionally contains polices specific to multi-unit residential buildings listed in Section 9.3.1, which are listed in the table that follows. The criteria are used to assess development proposals within all residential designations. Fotenn’s urban design opinion is provided on the compliance/non-compliance of the proposal based on high-level review. Further review at the Site Plan phase will be required.

Table 2: Official Plan Development Criteria for Multi-Unit Buildings and Intensification Proposals (Section 9.3.1.1)

Official Plan Policy:	Proposal Compliance/Non-compliance:
1. Building form, scale, height, setbacks, massing, appearance and siting are compatible in design, character and	Partially compliant. Of the considerations indicated, the massing and scale of the proposed building is non-compliant as it is generally incompatible with the existing and envisioned mid-rise character of the

orientation with buildings in the immediate vicinity.	surrounding neighbourhood. Recommendations to increase compliance are made throughout this review.
2. Proposals for residential lot infill will be compatible with the general frontage of lots in the immediate vicinity. The residential development can be adequately served by local convenience and neighbourhood shopping facilities, schools, trails, parks, recreation facilities and public transit.	Compliant. Commercial services are available at the mall facing the development, across Harvard Road, and the development will add new at-grade commercial frontage. Transit and several parks are in close proximity to the property. The development will include an indoor recreation amenity. A public school is within 1 km, but since the development is not intended to be family oriented, nearby school facilities are of a lesser consideration. Trails are somewhat distant from the property.
3. Vehicular traffic generated from the proposed development will not have an unacceptable impact on the planned function of the adjacent roads and intersections.	No comment. Defer to the City's Engineering department for review.
4. Vehicular access, parking and circulation can be adequately provided and impacts mitigated.	No comment. Defer to the City's Engineering department for review.
5. That adequate municipal infrastructure, services and amenity areas for residents can be provided.	No comment. Defer to the City's Engineering department for review.
6. Surface parking and driveways shall be minimized. Development shall extend, establish or reinforce a publicly accessible street grid network to ensure appropriate connectivity for pedestrians, cyclist and vehicular traffic, where applicable.	Compliant. Only one driveway will provide access to the property from Harvard Road. 79.5 % of the parking is proposed to be below grade; 175/220 parking spaces. The request is for 20% to be located at grade or below. The applicant should confirm the location of visitor parking.
7. Impacts on adjacent properties are minimized in relation to grading, drainage, location of service areas and microclimatic conditions, such as wind and shadowing.	Needs further review. Breaking up the massing of the building, as suggested in this review, could reduce disruption of solar access, and would potentially reduce wind impacts associated with a long, rectangular, slab apartment block. No comment on grading and drainage – defer to the City's Engineering department for review.
8. The development addresses public safety, identified public views and accessibility to open space, parks, trails and the Natural Heritage System, where applicable.	Compliant. No anticipated impacts. The property is not identified as part of a Natural Heritage System.
9. The conservation and integration of cultural heritage resources, including identified key public views can be achieved subject to the provisions of the Cultural Heritage Resources Section of this Plan.	Compliant. The property is not part of an identified public view.

4. Urban Design Manual: Gordon Street Intensification Corridor

The City's 2018 Urban Design Manual establishes a framework for urban design excellence throughout Guelph. The document is a tool used to implement the City's land use vision

articulated in the Official Plan. The document identifies opportunity areas, organizational improvement strategies, and urban design policy directions. It also identifies specific corridors for intensification. The subject property, and its surroundings southeast of Harvard Road, are located within the manual’s Gordon Street Intensification Corridor, which extends from Harvard Road to Harts Lane. The stated vision for this corridor is as follows:

- / Gordon Street is envisioned to become a vibrant pedestrian friendly street framed by mid-rise buildings, continuous rows of healthy trees, and active at-grade uses that engage the street and the sidewalk. Future development will carefully protect, maintain, restore, and enhance the Natural Heritage System and sensitively transition to the adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods.

Mid-rise buildings are described as being up to 6 storeys in height. The most relevant of the manual’s guiding principles for new development within the Gordon Street Intensification Corridor are indicated in the table below, along with Fotenn’s urban design opinion on the compliance/non-compliance of the proposal.

Table 3: Urban Design Manual Guidelines for the Gordon Street Intensification Corridor

Urban Design Guideline:	Proposal Compliance/Non-compliance:
1. Reflect Gordon Street’s City-building role by reinforcing it as a major street and promoting intensification in appropriate building forms.	Partially compliant. The proposal promotes intensification, but not in an appropriate building form.
2. Promote mid-rise as the dominant built form for intensification to frame streets, site edges, and outdoor amenity spaces.	Non-compliant. While reflecting a mid-rise built form by common standards, the proposed height of the development is considered to be high-rise as per the Official Plan category of buildings above 6 storeys. At the proposed 10-storey height and scale, the development is generally inconsistent with the mid-rise character envisioned for the Gordon Street Intensification Corridor.
3. Promote sunlight, views, and privacy through appropriate building design, including heights, floor plates, overall massing, separation distances, and appropriate street setbacks.	Partially compliant. The generally massing of the building is problematic, as discussed throughout this review.
4. Foster variety and flexibility in building form to reflect the diversity and character of the city.	Partially compliant. While the development is unique and distinct from other developments in the area, variety and flexible in form should be expressed within the height allowance provisions for the area.
5. Where appropriate, promote densities that allow for parking to be located underground or in screened facilities. Where surface parking is provided, it should be well-designed and landscaped.	Compliant. 79.5 % of the parking is proposed to be below grade; 175/220 parking spaces. The request is for 20% to be located at grade or below. The applicant should confirm the location of visitor parking.
6. Create pedestrian connections that facilitate an ease of mobility and expand the City’s active transportation network.	Partially compliant. Given the size of the property and proposed density, pedestrian connections within the property should be improved, particularly relating to internal circulation and exterior pathways at the south side of the building.

5. Recent Developments and Proposals

For context and comparison of development scale, existing mid to high-rise buildings within the Gordon Street corridor include⁹:

- / 4 storey/150 units per hectare (UPHa) at 1077 Gordon Street
- / 4 storeys/120-130 UPHa units at 1440 Gordon Street
- / 5 storeys/199 total units at 1274-1280 Gordon Street
- / 6 storeys/77 total units at 1291 Gordon Street
- / 7 storeys/160 total units at 1291 Gordon Street

Recent proposals within the Gordon Street corridor include¹⁰:

- / 6 storey/32 total units (132 UPHa) at 1300 Gordon Street
- / 6 storey/226 total units (115 UPHa) at 33-41 Arkell Road
- / 8 storeys/110 total units (172 UPHa) at 1354 Gordon Street
- / 10 storeys/325 total units (182 UPHa) at 1242-1270 Gordon Street

An approval was issued in 2013 by the Ontario Municipal Board to allow for an 11 and 9 storey development to be located northwest of the subject property at 716 Gordon Street, at the intersection with Stone Road East (another arterial road). The taller portion of the development is allowed at the corner. Floorplates are not to exceed 750 m² above the third and fourth storeys and the development is required to have 15 m separation between towers. Front and exterior yards are to be a minimum of 9 m and side and rear yards are to be a minimum of 15 m. The allowable Floor Space Index is 2.5. Landscaping is required for 35% of the property and commercial uses shall not exceed 33 m².

6. Development Massing

A 10-storey building (~30 m to roofline; ~34 m including mechanical penthouse) could be considered an appropriate development for 785 Gordon Street, if suitably designed, given the property's location within an Intensification Corridor. The proposal reflects directions of the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement and the 2017 Growth Plan for the Greater Horseshoe Area, which call for higher density development along arterial roads and higher order transit corridors. The proposed massing of the development is, however, excessive particularly due to the height and rectangular shape of the building forming a monolithic slab.

Spanning 98.82 m along Harvard Road, the proposed building would create a continuous and heavy streetwall. As a best practice, buildings should generally be no longer than 60 m in length to provide permeability that allows for sunlight to pass between buildings, reduces wind corridors, and allows for pedestrian circulation to, and through, the property. The applicant should consider breaking up the massing into at least two separate forms and implement substantial reductions in the massing to lessen the perceived scale of the development throughout. This would help to provide for a more appropriate transition to the surrounding low-rise development and potential future mid-rise development.

⁹ Based on information provided by the applicant.

¹⁰ Based on information provided by the applicant.

The elevations along both Harvard Road and Gordon Street should include a physical stepback above the 6th storey, adding to the visual break provided by the dark/light contrast of the colour blocking to more clearly define the podium of the building. A stepback of the 6th storey, in combination with the other built form suggestions in this review, would significantly help to reduce the massing of the building from the street. The windows, columns, and colours shown also contribute to breaking up the massing but are limited in their effect given that they are all on the same vertical plane. These elements, or more ideally entire portions of the building, should be recessed and offset from each other to add depth of plane and a meaningful reduction in the mass of the building.

On the southern and western elevations of the proposed building, the 6th to 10th storeys are proposed to step down towards the lower-height development that includes a 2-storey office building, 2-storey single detached houses, and 3-storey townhouses. The step down aims to provide a transition in height while mitigating privacy and overlook impacts to neighbours. However, this does little to reduce the large massing of the building when viewed from these perspectives since there is a lack of architectural treatments needed to adequately soften their presence. Additionally, the proposed design reinforces a 'wedding cake' appearance that should generally be avoided as a best practice. The building's stepbacks would perform better if their placements and depths were more varied and distinct. Issues with massing are further exacerbated by the elevations between the south 'wings' of the building that read as blank walls and require articulation (vertical and horizontal), as they will be highly visible by residents to the south.

7. Front Façades and Angular Planes

The Zoning By-law's Section 4.16.2 includes a requirement for a 45-degree angular plane that is applicable to new development on the subject property. This plane is used to determine the appropriate height of storeys and is measured from the centreline of the fronting road right-of-way. Providing for a larger front yard allows for greater building heights adjacent to the street, whereas a smaller front yard setback results in reduced building heights adjacent to the street. Providing a positive pedestrian experience along the street face and retaining solar access are key motives for municipalities to have angular plane requirements.

An increase to the angular plane requirements from the centreline of Harvard Road (45 degrees to 52 degrees) and from the centreline of Gordon Street (from 45 degrees to 46 degrees) is requested by the applicant to allow for a taller and higher-density development on the property. The implications of an up to 7-degree increase is not inherently significant for buildings with short street walls, but it would have a substantial impact if granted for a building of the proposed length (98.82 m) unless suitable massing strategies are implemented, as suggested throughout this review.

8. Common Amenity Spaces

The proposed development appears to be designed and sited to maximize density on the property, achieving 389 units/520 bedrooms at a density of 615 bedrooms per hectare. Over-building of the property leaves insufficient opportunity to achieve the functional elements needed to support a development of this scale while also achieving a high quality of design. Impacts are especially noted on the quantity and quality of space that would be

created for common amenity use. As proposed, the development would provide ~27% (~2,176.84 m²) of zoning-compliant common amenity space¹¹, contrast to the 7,980 m² required for an apartment development of this scale. Amenity space provisions for apartment buildings are listed in the City's Zoning By-law in Section 5.4.2.4¹².

Amongst the outdoor common amenity spaces proposed are three separate amenities indicated between the south 'wings' of the building, measuring 240 m², 187 m², and 200 m², from west to east. These spaces are shown to feature landscaping, benches, and decorative paving, but their function and enjoyability would be undermined by their co-location with functional elements of the building, including service parking, a loading bay, the exit to the building's refuse room, and an access ramp leading to the underground parking facility.

The incompatible mixing of the passive outdoor amenity use with the service nature of co-located elements would significantly diminish the user experience in these spaces. The central amenity space would be expected to have a prominent treatment and function over the other two spaces, but its association with the building's refuse exit and loading bay makes it read as the least desirable of the spaces. More ideally, in combination with the built form recommendations of this review, the outdoor amenity spaces would be consolidated to provide for a larger, more cohesive, and functional amenity, located away from service elements. This could be achieved by removing 'wings' of the building along with consolidating servicing components at the west end of the building.

Eliminating the 'wings' of the building would additionally help to reduce shadows cast onto the amenity spaces. Although they are progressively stepped, most of the proposed open spaces are confined within the 7 to 10-storey sections of the building, which would have an overwhelming scale and would put much of the amenity spaces into shadow for a considerable portion of the day. Notwithstanding general recommendation to reduce the massing of the building, the height of the 'wings' should generally be limited to the width of the open spaces producing a more human and comfortable scale.

Another consideration is that, as proposed, the outdoor amenity spaces would have at-grade residential uses with windows directly abutting each space. This may cause other residents to view the space as private and/or uncomfortable for communal use. This issue could be resolved by relocating the indoor amenity space from the north side of the building to the south. Grouping the building's communal elements would provide better separation between common and private uses, and ideally these spaces would serve as extensions of each other, reinforcing their intended functions.

The applicant is requesting several deviations from Zoning By-law to allow for additional areas on the property to count towards the common amenity space calculation. This includes amenity spaces proposed for the property's front and exterior side yard setbacks and within the front and exterior side yards in configurations that exceed 4 times their width. The applicant is additionally seeking to have private terraces and balconies included in the calculation.

¹¹ Sum of the proposed indoor amenity, south outdoor amenity spaces between building 'wings', landscape area in the southeast corner of side yard, and front and exterior side yards outside of the required setback.

¹² <https://quelp.ca/wp-content/uploads/Section5ResidentialZones.pdf>

The following table indicates the amenity areas proposed by the applicant. The approximate symbol (~) denotes estimates calculated by Fotenn based on the Site Plan overlays. As per the Zoning By-law, the minimum front and exterior side yard setbacks for the development are 6 m from property line. The building face is proposed to be ~9 m from property line on these sides. Calculations of each amenity area should be provided by the applicant.

Table 4: Proposed Common Amenity Space

Common Amenity Area Contributions		Amenity Area m ²	Compliance/Non-compliance
Indoor common		712.84	Compliant
Outdoor common, south side		627	Compliant
Outdoor common within exterior side yard setback, facing Harvard Road, excluding commercial patios	Within 0 - 6 m of PL	~618	Non-compliant
	Within 6 - 9 m PL	~219	Compliant
Outdoor common within required front yard setback, facing Gordon Street, excluding commercial patios	Within 0 - 6 m PL	~400	Non-compliant
	Within 6 - 9 m PL	~158	Compliant
Private terraces		443.66	Non-compliant
Private balconies		1,427.31	Non-compliant
Other landscaped areas (interior side and rear yard, non-linear)		~460	Compliant
	Total compliant:	~2,176.84 (~27% of required)	
	Additional requested, non-compliant:	~2,888.97 (~36% of required)	

PL = Property Line

Given the large footprint of the proposed building and its sizable rooftop, as well as the substantial of density on the site, options for providing a rooftop amenity space and/or a non-accessible green roof that has abundant solar access should be explored.

9. Shadow Impacts External to the Property

A Shadow Study was submitted by a consultant of the applicant generally in accordance with the City’s Sun and Shadow Study Terms of Reference. The shadow dates and times evaluated are indicated below, reflecting the requirement to show shadows at least 1.5 hours after sunrise and 1.5 hours before sunset. The hours evaluated for winter solstice should ideally be corrected reflecting errors in the indicated times of sunrise and sunset, but since the City’s evaluation criteria is based on spring, summer, and fall solstices, these corrections are not important for the evaluation.

- / April 21: 8 am to 6 pm hourly (sunrise: 6:27; sunset: 8:11 pm)
- / June 21: 8 am to 7 pm hourly (sunrise: 5:39; sunset: 9:05 pm)
- / September 21: 7 am to 5 pm hourly (sunrise: 7:07 am; sunset 7:20 pm)
- / December 21: ~~10~~ 9 am to ~~3~~ 4 pm hourly (sunrise: ~~8:50~~ 7:49 am; sunset ~~5:47~~ 4:49 pm)

The City's criteria for acceptable impacts to Residential Amenity Spaces external to the development site is that shadows should not last for more than one hour per day on areas such as yards, decks, and (rooftop) patios and pools on the April, June, and September solstices. The point of assessment is the centre of decks and (rooftop) patios and pools, where applicable, or 3 m from the midpoint of the rear wall of the dwelling. In cases where there is existing shade, the addition of new net shadows should result in not less than two hours of sunlight. Where less than two hours of sunlight already exists, no new net shade may be added. The City's criteria for acceptable impacts are met if incremental shadows occur for no more than two consecutive test times.

Fotenn generally agrees with the conclusion of the applicant's sun and shadow study, in that the proposed development would generally not have a significant shadow impact on the surrounding neighbourhood, though it will impose extensive shadowing onto the sidewalks adjacent to the property along Gordon Street and Harvard Road. The City's criteria regarding incremental shadows¹³ cannot be evaluated due to inadequate representation in the visuals provided.

10. Pedestrian Level Wind Impacts

The City has developed Terms of Reference for Pedestrian Level Wind Studies of the impacts of proposed developments. For buildings 9 to 10 storeys in height, a desktop analysis using numerical tools is required to form a qualitative assessment and address wind impact mitigation. The applicant has submitted a study generally reflecting the City's terms, though differing numerical values for comfort categories have been used and should be adjusted to align with the required terms.

Key findings of the wind study include:

- / The proposed development would cause some localized increases to wind speed in the immediate vicinity, and especially areas adjacent to Harvard Road and Gordon Street
- / Other areas around the development would see minor increases in wind speeds, however, these areas remain suitable for their intended usage
- / Areas further from the site would be largely unaffected by the development
- / With consideration to the intended usage for the different areas, the south corner of Harvard Road and Gordon Street is identified as an area expected to require some mitigation
- / The north building corner is near an entry and may require some modest mitigation to improve it to be suited for standing or better year-round
- / Other main entry areas are all expected to be suited for the intended usage year-round

The study recommends the following wind mitigations:

¹³ "Incremental Shadows" means net new shadows over and above all existing building shadows and as-of-right shadows from the approved zoning massing envelope for the subject site along with shadows from approved but not yet built buildings.

- / The inclusion of landscaping along the north side of the development to improve the winds in this area, as well as sidewalk areas along Harvard Road and Gordon Street in general
- / Existing landscaping along the north of Harvard Road and west of Gordon Street, which were not included in the testing, would also have beneficial effects in impeding common winds westerly winds that affect these sidewalk areas
- / The inclusion of two corridors of trees and planters along both Harvard Road and Gordon Street would offer benefit to the winds at the north building corner, and ideally these trees should be conifers to be most effective on a year-round basis

11. Pedestrian Access and Circulation

Two of the proposed outdoor amenity spaces are without direct pedestrian access from the interior of the building and are instead accessed from a pathway at the south side of the building. Direct access should be considered for all of the amenity spaces, and internal links should ideally be provided to connect the main residential entrance on Harvard Road with each amenity space via inter walkways. An atrium of sorts could be considered for linking to the central amenity space, which should be designed with a sense of prominence, unless the spaces are consolidated as previously suggested.

Pedestrian circulation external to the building, at the south side, is additionally problematic. The excessive build-out of the property leaves little room to mitigate the impacts of parking and access on pedestrian circulation. While it is good that walkways are provided, these are interrupted three times by parking and servicing components. Pedestrians are likely to follow the shortest route to their destination and would therefore likely cut across the parking spaces and drive accesses, negotiating their way with drivers, rather than following walkways that detour into the amenity spaces.

12. Vehicle Circulation and Parking

The Site Plan indicates that vehicle access would be from a single driveway situated on the northwest corner of the property on Harvard Road, which avoids interruptions to the sidewalk along Gordon Street. Parking is generally well-screened from Harvard Road and Gordon Street with it being located on the south side of the building. Provision of underground parking minimizes the need to provide surface parking.

Multiple mature trees currently stand along the south edge of the property which should ideally be retained to screen and buffer the parking from the neighboring residential use. The opportunity to retain, or plant new, vegetation along this property line would be reduced if the request for the parking setback is approved, changing the minimum from 3 m to 1.4 m, which may leave insufficient soil area to support healthy vegetation. The lengthy parking area should ideally be broken up with landscaped islands/fingers, in which groupings of the existing vegetation could be retained. The requested setback reduction and removal of trees appears to be another consequence of the excessive proposed build-out of the property.

13. Bicycle Parking

The applicant's Preliminary Landscape Concept Plan shows three groupings of bike racks are shown providing 12 locking spaces along Harvard Road and 8 spaces along Gordon Street.

Including additional outdoor spaces may be appropriate given the student demographic of the building and likely high participation in active transportation.

14. Loading and Refuse Pick-up

As previously mentioned, the proposed loading area is co-located with the central outdoor amenity space and is likely to reduce the quality of experience enjoyed in that space. Loading and refuse pick-up functions should ideally be consolidated at the western end of the building so that associated traffic does not have to drive through the property. The first storey of the building, proposed at 3 m in height, should ideally be increased to 4.5 m to allow sufficient height for loading and servicing to occur internally where it would be fully screened from view. On Gordon Street, this increase in ground floor height would further help to visually distinguish the commercial storey from the residential use above.

15. Summary and Next Steps

The general conclusion of this review is that the combined height and massing of the proposed development fails to deliver on urban design best practices geared at creating a proportionally scaled and comfortable pedestrian-level environment. The development proposal is non-compliant with aspects of the City's policies that address urban design, including development height, massing, density, and permeability. The proposal is only partially compliant with policies relating to podium articulation and pedestrian circulation. The proposal is non-compliant with Zoning By-law regulations relating to common amenity space and parking space provisions.

Intensification could be appropriate at the subject property given its location within the Official Plan's Gordon Street Intensification Corridor, but design strategies beyond those proposed would be needed to mitigate the actual and perceived massing of such a sizable development. Improvements should additionally be considered relating to the quantity, quality, and siting of common amenity spaces, which are compromised by the excessive build-out intended for the property. It is recommended that the City work with the applicant and consultants to explore alternative design options, which could include:

- / Reducing the overall massing of the development by separating the building into at least two forms
- / Adding vertical and horizontal recessions and articulation to the building elevations along Harvard Road and Gordon Street (as proposed, the only recession is at the 10th storey)
- / Adding variation to the setbacks on the south and west sides of the building to avoid a 'wedding-cake' appearance
- / Reducing the footprint of the building to allow for appropriate quantity and siting of common amenity spaces and service areas
- / Removing building 'wings' which overwhelm and shadow the south amenity spaces
- / Relocating the indoor amenity space from the north to the south side of the building so that it can interface with outdoor amenities, reinforcing their communal feel and function
- / Consolidating south amenity spaces to provide for a larger and more functional outdoor space, separated from the serving elements of the development
- / Exploring options for a rooftop amenity space and/or green roof with ample solar

- access
- / Pursuing pedestrian level-wind impact mitigations, achieved through landscaping corridors, ideally with conifers and planters along Harvard Road and Gordon Street, reflecting recommendations of the wind study
- / Enhancing pedestrian linkages from the main residential entrance on Harvard Road to the outdoor common amenity spaces at the south side of the development
- / Providing direct-path pedestrian walkways at the south exterior of the building that are not interrupted by parking and servicing elements
- / Retaining parking setbacks (e.g. 3 m) sufficient enough to support healthy vegetation, and ideally to retain existing mature trees
- / Adding landscaped islands or fingers to break up the parking area and increase opportunities for tree canopy on the property
- / Adding more exterior bicycle parking next to commercial uses
- / Increasing the height of the first storey to 4.5 m to accommodate servicing
- / Consolidating servicing functions at the west side of the building to reduce truck circulation through the property and impacts on amenity spaces and

Future submissions should address the following as part of a complete application:

- / Clarification of request for common amenity space reduction that is consistent with Zoning By-law definitions for common and private amenity space (i.e. private balconies and terraces and commercial patio spaces should not be included in the reduction request)
- / Indication of area measurements on a plan for each amenity space that is compliant and requested
- / Correction of setback reduction request regarding the 15 m setback from centre-line of Gordon Street, which falls outside of the property boundary
- / Correction of incremental shadow representation on the sun and shadow study visuals
- / Adjustment of numerical values for the comfort categories of the pedestrian level wind impact study to correspond with the City's terms of reference
- / Indication of visitor parking location

Prepared By:

Erica Beasley
Senior Planner
Fotenn Planning + Design
416.789.4530 ext. 19
beasley@fotenn.com

Ute Maya-Giambattista
Principal, Urban Design
Fotenn Planning + Design
416.789.4530 ext. 18
maya-giambattista@fotenn.com

Matt Reid
Principal, Planning + Policy
Fotenn Planning + Design
416.789.4530 ext. 12
matt.reid@fotenn.com

Reviewed By:

David de Groot
Senior Urban Designer
Planning and Building Services
City of Guelph
519-822-1260 ext. 2358
david.degroot@guelph.ca

Katie Nasswetter
Senior Development Planner
Planning and Building Services
City of Guelph
519-822-1260 ext. 2356
Katie.nasswetter@guelph.ca